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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO. [REDACTED]

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Syria

DATE DISTR. 20 Dec. 1949

SUBJECT Syrian Coup d'Etat

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1. The following Syrian Army officers, all of whom oppose union of Syria with Iraq, are listed by source as leaders in the Syrian coup d'etat of 19 December 1949: Adib Shishakli, Anwar Bannud, Fawzi Silu, Tawfiq Mizan-al-Din, and Shawkat Shukayr.

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2. Following the staging of the coup d'etat, Mizan-al-Din and Shukayr went to the house of Premier Hashim Atasi to try to get him to sign a postdated order calling for military action against "officers intriguing against the republican government." Source states that their visit was part of an all-out effort to make it appear that the coup d'etat was staged with Government approval, so that the question of recognition of the new regime would not arise. In the event that the two men do not obtain Atasi's signature, the government of Shukri Quwatli will be recalled, provided that members of that government agree to endorse the coup. Source asserts in this connection that the son of Jamil Hardan, former Premier of Syria now in Egypt, states that his father will arrive in Damascus this week as the result of an invitation by the Syrian Army. Hardan's son adds that Hardan and his supporters had no advance knowledge of the coup d'etat, however, or of the reason for the invitation to return.

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3. Source states that Akram Haurani was the only politician who was involved in the coup,* and states that Haurani told an "absolutely reliable" person that Sami Hinnawi and As'ad Talas had been plotting to break the Syrian truce with Israel, thus making essential a military union of Syria with Iraq, the main point which has stood in the way of bringing about a complete union of the two countries. Source states that he is positive that the Saudi Arabian Legation in Damascus, through the intermediary of Fawwaz Sha'lan, actively encouraged the Hinnawi-Talas plan to break the truce with Israel.

25X1A* [REDACTED] Comment. The source of paragraphs 1-2 above, and a third source, [REDACTED] concur.

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BY GABLE

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